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### ⑯ Semiconductor pressure sensor connected to a support element.

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⑯ Proprietor : **TEXAS INSTRUMENTS  
DEUTSCHLAND GMBH  
Hagertystrasse 1  
D-85356 Freising (DE)**

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⑯ Inventor : **Liebgen, Manfred H  
Am Moesling 3  
W-8301 Bruckberg (DE)**

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⑯ Representative : **Schwepfinger, Karl-Heinz,  
Dipl.-Ing. et al  
Prinz & Partner,  
Manzingerweg 7  
D-81241 München (DE)**

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## Description

The invention relates to a semiconductor pressure sensor as defined in the pre-characterizing part of claim 1.

From US-A-4,373,397 a pressure sensor is known having a diaphragm of silicon and including resistors disposed on the side of the pressure sensor subjected to pressure. A ring-shaped cylinder barrel extends about the periphery of the diaphragm and has a rear face cemented to a wall by an elastic plastic material. This pressure sensor does not have a separate support element having an opening therethrough for supporting the semiconductor substrate of the sensor.

The invention is based on the problem of providing a semiconductor pressure sensor of the type mentioned at the beginning which is suitable for use at high pressures and the output signals of which are hardly influenced by form changes of the support element.

According to the invention this problem is solved by the features of the characterizing part of claim 1.

In the semiconductor pressure sensor according to the invention the connection to the support element is on the active surface of the substrate with interposition of an elastomer seal. This means that under the action of pressure on the diaphragm a force arises on the joint between the pressure sensor and the support element and makes the sealing action the greater the greater the pressure. An additional rigid clamping of the substrate to the support element is not necessary and consequently the desired independence from mechanical deformations of the support element is achieved.

Advantageous further developments of the invention are characterized in the subsidiary claims.

The invention will now be explained by way of example with reference to the drawing in which the pressure sensor according to the invention is illustrated in a sectional view with its features essential to the invention.

The pressure sensor 10 illustrated in the drawing includes a semiconductor substrate 12 which has an active surface 14 and a rear side 16. Formed in the rear side 16 is a recess 18 so that a diaphragm 20 adjoining the active surface 14 is formed and is surrounded by thick edge regions 22, 24.

Formed in the active surface 14 are integrated components, for example integrated resistors 26, 28, which on deformation of the diaphragm 20 likewise undergo a mechanical dimensional or shape change and vary one of their electrical parameters, in the example given their resistance.

The electrical signals are supplied to and from the integrated components 26, 28 by means of bond wires 30, 32.

The pressure sensor 10 is disposed in a support

element 34 which is provided with an opening 36 of which the inner peripheral surface forms a step 38. The pressure sensor 10 is adhered to the step 38 of the support element 34 with interposition of an elastomer seal 40. The adhesive action results from the adhesion force active between the materials involved. As material for the elastomer seal for example silicone rubber, butyl rubber or also nitrile rubber may be used. Any other material with comparable properties can of course be employed.

The support element 34 is mounted in turn in a housing 42 which has an opening 44 for introduction of the pressure to be measured. As apparent in the drawing the pressure acts on the face of the diaphragm 20 facing the rear side of the pressure sensor 10. As a result, the pressure acting generates a force which intensifies the sealing action of the elastomer 40 to an extent which is greater the higher the pressure. Because of its special mounting the pressure sensor 10 can therefore be employed for high pressures.

For mechanical uncoupling between the support element 34 and the pressure sensor 10 a depression 46 surrounding the diaphragm can be formed in the active surface of the substrate 12 in the region between the diaphragm 20 and the connecting region to the support element 34. In this manner, mechanical deformations caused by temperature changes in the support element are prevented from causing deformations of the diaphragm 20 which would result in a falsification of the measurement result. This mechanical decoupling effective in addition to the use of the elastomer seal 40 permits hysteresis-free measurement results which are very extensively free from temperature influences.

If a further mechanical decoupling is desired a plurality of depressions similar to the depression 46 may be formed in the thick edge regions 22, 24 of the substrate. Formation of such depressions from the rear side of the substrate 12 is also possible.

In the drawing the pressure sensor 10 is indicated only schematically; it need not be particularly shown how electrical signals are supplied and carried away because this is not essential to the invention.

## Claims

1. A pressure sensor comprising:  
a substrate (12) of semiconductor material having first and second major surfaces,  
said semiconductor substrate being provided with a recess in the second major surface thereof extending toward the first major surface so as to define relatively thick peripheral edge regions (22, 24) bounding the recess and a relatively thin pressure-sensitive diaphragm (20) extending between said relatively thick edge regions

and connected thereto,

a support element (34) on which said semiconductor substrate is mounted and supporting said semiconductor substrate at the relatively thick peripheral edge regions of said semiconductor substrate,

elastomeric means (40) interposed between said support element and the relatively thick peripheral edge regions of said semiconductor substrate and providing a seal between said support element and said semiconductor substrate at the relatively thick peripheral edge regions of said semiconductor substrate,

at least one integrated component (26, 28) provided on said first major surface of said semiconductor substrate,

the relatively thin pressure-sensitive diaphragm of said semiconductor substrate being responsive to pressure incident thereon to undergo mechanical deformation, and

said at least one integrated component having an electrical parameter subject to variation in response to mechanical deformation of said pressure-sensitive diaphragm under the influence of pressure, the variation in the electrical parameter of said at least one integrated component being proportional to the magnitude of the mechanical deformation of said thin pressure-sensitive diaphragm so as to be indicative of a measurement of a pressure to which said relatively thin pressure-sensitive diaphragm is exposed;

characterized in that

said support element (34) has an opening (36) therethrough and provides an inner peripheral support (38) surface in opposed relation to the first major surface at the relatively thick peripheral edge regions of said semiconductor substrate,

said elastomeric means (40) is interposed between said inner peripheral support surface of said support element and the first major surface at the relatively thick peripheral edge regions of said semiconductor substrate so as to provide a peripheral seal between said inner peripheral support surface of said support element and the first major surface at the relatively thick peripheral edge regions of said semiconductor substrate,

said at least one integrated component (26, 28) being provided in a relatively thick edge of said semiconductor substrate adjacent to said pressure-sensitive diaphragm,

the second major surface of said semiconductor substrate being free of obstruction and positioned for exposure to pressure introduced into the opening through said support element,

the relatively thin pressure-sensitive diaphragm of said semiconductor substrate being disposed in the opening through said support ele-

ment and being responsive to pressure introduced into the opening through said support element and entering the recess provided in the semiconductor substrate to undergo mechanical deformation, and

the sealing action of said elastomeric means between said inner peripheral support surface of said support element and the first major surface at the relatively thick peripheral edge regions of said semiconductor substrate increasing in response to the introduction of the pressure being measured into the opening through said support element and through the recess provided in said semiconductor substrate to impinge upon the relatively thin pressure-sensitive diaphragm of said semiconductor substrate.

5. A pressure sensor as set forth in claim 1, further characterized in that said support element is provided with a counterbore to define a shoulder along the inner periphery thereof at the juncture between the opening and the counterbore and extending outwardly from the opening for providing said inner peripheral support surface to which the first major surface at the relatively thick peripheral edge regions of said semiconductor substrate is in opposed relation with said elastomeric means interposed therebetween.
10. A pressure sensor as set forth in claim 2, further including a housing (42) defining a chamber in which said support element is fixedly mounted, and further characterized in that said housing has an input port (44) in registration with the counterbore and the opening in said support element and the recess provided in said semiconductor substrate for introduction of the pressure to be measured.
15. A pressure sensor as set forth in any of claims 1-3, further characterized in that mechanical decoupling means are provided between said support element and said relatively thin pressure-sensitive diaphragm of said semiconductor substrate for preventing mechanical deformations in said semiconductor substrate caused by temperature changes in said support element from causing mechanical deformations of said relatively thin pressure-sensitive diaphragm.
20. A pressure sensor as set forth in any of claims 1-3, further characterized in that said mechanical decoupling means comprises a depression (46) formed in said relatively thick peripheral edge regions of said semiconductor substrate and surrounding said relatively thin pressure-sensitive diaphragm, said depression opening onto the first major surface of said semiconductor substrate and being
25. A pressure sensor as set forth in any of claims 1-3, further characterized in that said support element is provided with a counterbore to define a shoulder along the inner periphery thereof at the juncture between the opening and the counterbore and extending outwardly from the opening for providing said inner peripheral support surface to which the first major surface at the relatively thick peripheral edge regions of said semiconductor substrate is in opposed relation with said elastomeric means interposed therebetween.
30. A pressure sensor as set forth in claim 2, further including a housing (42) defining a chamber in which said support element is fixedly mounted, and further characterized in that said housing has an input port (44) in registration with the counterbore and the opening in said support element and the recess provided in said semiconductor substrate for introduction of the pressure to be measured.
35. A pressure sensor as set forth in any of claims 1-3, further characterized in that mechanical decoupling means are provided between said support element and said relatively thin pressure-sensitive diaphragm of said semiconductor substrate for preventing mechanical deformations in said semiconductor substrate caused by temperature changes in said support element from causing mechanical deformations of said relatively thin pressure-sensitive diaphragm.
40. A pressure sensor as set forth in any of claims 1-3, further characterized in that said support element is provided with a counterbore to define a shoulder along the inner periphery thereof at the juncture between the opening and the counterbore and extending outwardly from the opening for providing said inner peripheral support surface to which the first major surface at the relatively thick peripheral edge regions of said semiconductor substrate is in opposed relation with said elastomeric means interposed therebetween.
45. A pressure sensor as set forth in any of claims 1-3, further characterized in that said support element is provided with a counterbore to define a shoulder along the inner periphery thereof at the juncture between the opening and the counterbore and extending outwardly from the opening for providing said inner peripheral support surface to which the first major surface at the relatively thick peripheral edge regions of said semiconductor substrate is in opposed relation with said elastomeric means interposed therebetween.
50. A pressure sensor as set forth in any of claims 1-3, further characterized in that said support element is provided with a counterbore to define a shoulder along the inner periphery thereof at the juncture between the opening and the counterbore and extending outwardly from the opening for providing said inner peripheral support surface to which the first major surface at the relatively thick peripheral edge regions of said semiconductor substrate is in opposed relation with said elastomeric means interposed therebetween.
55. A pressure sensor as set forth in any of claims 1-3, further characterized in that said support element is provided with a counterbore to define a shoulder along the inner periphery thereof at the juncture between the opening and the counterbore and extending outwardly from the opening for providing said inner peripheral support surface to which the first major surface at the relatively thick peripheral edge regions of said semiconductor substrate is in opposed relation with said elastomeric means interposed therebetween.

disposed between said relatively thin pressure-sensitive diaphragm and said elastomeric means providing the peripheral seal between the first major surface at the relatively thick peripheral edge regions of said semiconductor substrate and said inner peripheral support surface of said support element.

6. A pressure sensor as set forth in claim 5, further characterized in that said depression is disposed inwardly with respect to said inner peripheral support surface of said support element for isolating said relatively thin pressure-sensitive diaphragm of said semiconductor substrate from mechanical deformations in said support element caused by temperature changes in said support element.

7. A pressure sensor as set forth in any preceding claim, further characterized in that said elastomeric means is made of a material taken from the class including silicone rubber, butyl rubber and nitrile rubber.

**Patentansprüche**

1. Drucksensor mit:  
 einem Substrat (12) aus Halbleitermaterial mit einer ersten und einer zweiten Hauptfläche, wobei das Halbleitersubstrat mit einer Ausnehmung in der zweiten Hauptfläche versehen ist, die sich so zu der ersten Hauptfläche hin erstreckt, daß relativ dicke, die Ausnehmung begrenzende Umfangsrandbereiche (22, 24) und eine relativ dünne, sich zwischen den relativ dicken Umfangsrandbereichen in Verbindung mit diesen erstreckende druckempfindliche Membran (20) gebildet werden,  
 ein Trägerelement (34), auf dem das Halbleitersubstrat befestigt ist und das das Halbleitersubstrat an dessen relativ dicken Umfangsrandbereichen trägt,  
 ein Elastomermittel (40), das zwischen das Trägerelement und die relativ dicken Umfangsrandbereiche des Halbleitersubstrats eingefügt ist und eine Abdichtung zwischen dem Trägerelement und dem Halbleitersubstrat an den relativ dicken Umfangsrandbereichen des Halbleitersubstrats bildet,  
 wenigstens ein integriertes Bauelement (26, 28) auf der ersten Hauptfläche des Halbleitersubstrats, wobei die relativ dünne druckempfindliche Membran des Halbleitersubstrats auf einen auf sie einwirkenden Druck so anspricht, daß sie eine mechanische Verformung erfährt, und wobei das wenigstens eine integrierte Bauelement einen elektrischen Parameter hat, der Änderungen in

5 Abhängigkeit von der mechanischen Verformung der druckempfindlichen Membran unter dem Einfluß von Druck erfährt, wobei die Änderung des elektrischen Parameters des wenigstens einen integrierten Bauelements der Größe der mechanischen Verformung der dünnen druckempfindlichen Membran so proportional ist, daß sie ein Maß des Drucks angibt, dem die relativ dünne druckempfindliche Membran ausgesetzt ist, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß  
 10 das Trägerelement (34) mit einer durchgehenden Öffnung (36) versehen ist und eine innere Randträgerfläche (38) in Gegenüberlage zur ersten Hauptfläche an den relativ dicken Umfangsrandbereichen des Halbleitersubstrats bildet, das Elastomermittel (40) zwischen die innere Randträgerfläche des Trägerelements und die erste Hauptfläche bei den relativ dicken Umfangsrandbereichen des Halbleitersubstrats so eingefügt ist, daß eine Umfangsdichtung zwischen der inneren Umfangsträgerfläche des Trägerelements und der ersten Hauptfläche bei den relativ dicken Umfangsrandbereichen des Halbleitersubstrats bildet,  
 15 das wenigstens eine integrierte Bauelement (26, 28) in einem relativ dicken Rand des Halbleitersubstrats angrenzend an die druckempfindliche Membran angebracht ist, die zweite Hauptfläche des Halbleitersubstrats frei zugänglich ist und so angeordnet ist, daß sie dem in die Öffnung durch das Trägerelement eingeführten Druck ausgesetzt ist, die relativ dünne druckempfindliche Membran des Halbleitersubstrats in der durch das Trägerelement hindurchgehenden Öffnung angeordnet ist und auf den in die Öffnung durch das Trägerelement hindurch eingeführten und in die im Halbleitersubstrat angebrachte Ausnehmung eindringenden Druck so anspricht, daß sie eine mechanische Verformung ausführt, und die Dichtwirkung des Elastomermeitels zwischen der inneren Umfangsträgerfläche des Trägerelements und der ersten Hauptfläche bei den relativ dicken Umfangsrandbereichen des Halbleitersubstrats abhängig von dem zu messenden Druck zunimmt, der in die Öffnung durch das Trägerelement und durch die in dem Halbleitersubstrat angebrachte Ausnehmung eingeführt wird und auf die relativ dünne druckempfindliche Membran des Halbleitersubstrats auftrifft.

20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55

2. Drucksensor nach Anspruch 1, ferner dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß das Trägerelement mit einer Gegenbohrung versehen ist, die längs ihres Innenumfangs eine Schulter an der Verbindung zwischen der Öffnung und der Gegenbohrung bildet und sich von der Öffnung aus nach außen erstreckt, damit die innere Umfangsträgerfläche

gebildet wird, der die erste Hauptfläche bei den relativ dicken Umfangsrandbereichen des Halbleitersubstrats mit dazwischengefügtem Elastomerittel gegenüberliegt.

3. Drucksensor nach Anspruch 2, ferner enthaltend ein Gehäuse (42), das eine Kammer bildet, in der das Trägerelement fest angebracht ist, und ferner dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß das Gehäuse eine Eingangsöffnung (44) hat, die in Ausrichtung auf die Gegenbohrung und die Öffnung in dem Trägerelement und die Ausnehmung in dem Halbleitersubstrat liegt, um den zu messenden Druck einzuführen.

4. Drucksensor nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 3, ferner dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß zwischen dem Trägerelement und der relativ dünnen druckempfindlichen Membran des Halbleitersubstrats Entkopplungsmittel vorgesehen sind, um mechanische Verformungen im Halbleitersubstrat, die durch Temperaturänderungen in dem Trägerelement hervorgerufen werden, daran zu hindern, mechanische Verformungen der relativ dünnen druckempfindlichen Membran hervorzurufen.

5. Drucksensor nach Anspruch 4, ferner dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die mechanischen Entkopplungsmittel eine Vertiefung (46) aufweisen, die in den relativ dicken Umfangsrandbereichen des Halbleitersubstrats gebildet ist und die relativ dünne druckempfindliche Membran umgibt, wobei die Vertiefung zur ersten Hauptfläche des Halbleitersubstrats hin offen ist und zwischen der relativ dünnen druckempfindlichen Membran und dem Elastomerittel angeordnet ist, das die Umfangsdichtung zwischen der ersten Hauptfläche bei den relativ dicken Umfangsrandbereichen des Halbleitersubstrats und der inneren Umfangsträgerfläche des Trägerelements bildet.

6. Drucksensor nach Anspruch 5, ferner dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die Vertiefung innerhalb der inneren Umfangsträgerfläche des Trägerelements angeordnet ist, um die relativ dünne druckempfindliche Membran des Halbleitersubstrats von mechanischen Verformungen im Trägerelement, die durch Temperaturänderungen in diesem Trägerelement hervorgerufen werden, zu isolieren.

7. Drucksensor nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, ferner dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß das Elastomerittel aus einem Material hergestellt ist, das der Klasse entnommen ist, die Silikonkummi, Butylkummi und Nitrilkummi enthält.

## Revendications

1. Capteur de pression comprenant :  
un substrat (12) formé d'un matériau semi-conducteur et possédant des première et seconde surfaces principales,  
ledit substrat semi-conducteur étant pourvu d'un renforcement aménagé dans sa seconde surface principale et s'étendant en direction de la première surface principale de manière à définir des régions de bord périphériques relativement épaisses (22,24) délimitant le renforcement, un diaphragme relativement mince (20) sensible à la pression et s'étendant entre lesdites régions de bord relativement épaisses et raccordé à ces régions,  
un élément de support (34), sur lequel ledit substrat semi-conducteur est monté et qui supporte ledit substrat semi-conducteur au niveau des régions de bord périphériques relativement épaisses dudit substrat semi-conducteur,  
des moyens élastomères (40) intercalés entre ledit élément de support et lesdites régions de bord périphériques relativement épaisses dudit substrat semi-conducteur et établissant une étanchéité entre ledit élément de support et ledit substrat semi-conducteur au niveau desdites régions de bord périphériques relativement épaisses dudit substrat semi-conducteur,  
au moins un composant intégré (26,28) prévu sur ladite première surface dudit substrat semi-conducteur,  
le diaphragme relativement mince, sensible à la pression, dudit substrat semi-conducteur étant apte à répondre à une pression qui lui est appliquée en subissant une déformation mécanique, et  
ledit au moins un composant intégré possédant un paramètre électrique susceptible de varier en réponse à une déformation mécanique dudit diaphragme sensible à la pression sous l'influence d'une pression, la variation du paramètre électrique dudit au moins un composant intégré étant proportionnelle à l'amplitude de la déformation mécanique dudit diaphragme mince sensible à la pression de manière à être indicative d'une mesure de la pression dans laquelle est exposé ledit diaphragme relativement mince, sensible à la pression,  
caractérisé en ce que  
ledit élément de support (34) possède une ouverture (36) qui le traverse, et forme une surface intérieure périphérique de support (38) située en vis-à-vis de la première surface principale au niveau des régions de bord périphériques relativement épaisses dudit substrat semi-conducteur,  
lesdits moyens élastomères (40) sont in-

tercalés entre ladite surface intérieure périphérique de support dudit élément de support et la première surface principale au niveau desdites régions de bord périphériques relativement épaisses dudit substrat semiconducteur de manière à établir une étanchéité périphérique entre ladite surface intérieure périphérique de support dudit élément de support et la première surface principale au niveau des régions de bord périphériques relativement épaisses dudit substrat semiconducteur,

ledit au moins un composant intégré (26,28) étant pourvu d'un bord relativement épais dudit substrat semiconducteur, adjacent audit diaphragme sensible à la pression,

la seconde surface principale dudit substrat semiconducteur étant libre de tout obstacle et étant positionnée de manière à être exposée à la pression introduite dans l'ouverture par l'intermédiaire dudit élément de support,

le diaphragme relativement mince sensible à la pression dudit substrat semiconducteur étant disposé dans l'ouverture traversant ledit élément de support et étant sensible à la pression introduite dans l'ouverture à travers ledit élément de support et pénétrant dans le renforcement aménagé dans le substrat semiconducteur, et suscitant une déformation mécanique, et

l'action d'étanchéité desdits moyens élastomères entre ladite surface intérieure périphérique de support dudit élément de support et la première surface principale au niveau des régions de bord périphériques relativement épaisses dudit substrat semiconducteur augmentant en réponse à l'introduction de la pression mesurée dans l'ouverture traversant ledit élément de support et le renforcement aménagé dans ledit substrat semiconducteur pour s'appliquer au diaphragme relativement mince, sensible à la pression, dudit substrat semiconducteur.

2. Capteur de pression selon la revendication 1, caractérisé en outre en ce que ledit élément de support est pourvu d'un contre-perçage servant à définir un épaulement le long de sa périphérie intérieure, au niveau de la jonction entre l'ouverture et le contre-perçage et s'étendant vers l'extérieur à partir de l'ouverture de manière à former ladite surface intérieure périphérique de support, en vis-à-vis de laquelle est disposée la première surface principale au niveau des régions de bord périphériques relativement épaisses dudit substrat semiconducteur, moyennant l'interposition desdits moyens élastomères entre ces surfaces.
3. Capteur de pression selon la revendication 2, comportant en outre un boîtier (42) définissant une chambre dans laquelle ledit élément de sup-

port est monté de façon fixe, et en outre caractérisé en ce que

ledit boîtier possède un orifice d'entrée (44) aligné avec le contre-perçage et l'ouverture aménagée dans ledit élément de support et le renforcement prévu dans ledit substrat semiconducteur pour l'introduction de la pression à mesurer.

4. Capteur de pression selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1-3, caractérisé en outre en ce que des moyens de découplage mécaniques sont prévus entre ledit élément de support et ledit diaphragme relativement mince, sensible à la pression, dudit substrat semiconducteur pour empêcher que des déformations mécaniques provoquées dans ledit substrat semiconducteur par des variations de température dans ledit élément de support ne provoquent des déformations mécaniques dudit diaphragme relativement mince, sensible à la pression.
5. Capteur de pression selon la revendication 4, caractérisé en outre en ce que lesdits moyens de couplage mécaniques comprennent un renforcement (46) aménagé dans lesdites régions de bord périphériques relativement épaisse dudit substrat semiconducteur et entourant ledit diaphragme relativement mince sensible à la pression, ledit renforcement débouchant dans la première surface principale dudit substrat semiconducteur et étant disposé entre ledit diaphragme relativement mince, sensible à la pression et lesdits moyens élastomères établissant l'étanchéité périphérique entre la première surface principale au niveau des régions de bord périphériques relativement épaisse dudit substrat semiconducteur et ladite surface intérieure périphérique de support dudit élément de support.
6. Capteur de pression selon la revendication 5, caractérisé en outre en ce que ledit renforcement est disposé à l'intérieur de ladite surface intérieure périphérique de support dudit élément de support pour isoler ledit diaphragme relativement mince, sensible à la pression, dudit substrat semiconducteur vis-à-vis de déformations mécaniques provoquées dans ledit élément de support par des variations de température dans ledit élément de support.
7. Capteur de pression selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, caractérisé en outre en ce que lesdits moyens élastomères sont réalisés en un matériau choisi dans la catégorie incluant le caoutchouc silicone, le caoutchouc butyle et le caoutchouc nitrile.

